

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for providing Instant Messaging (IM) services in a wireless communication system, comprising:

5 an IM data storage device configured to store first IM contact data associated with an IM client;

an IM server configured to access said IM data storage device and retrieve said first IM contact data associated with said IM client; and

10 an IM access portal in operable communication with said IM server and configured to access second IM contact data associated with said IM client and transmitted to a wireless device of said IM client during a prior wireless connection, said IM access portal further configured to perform a comparison of said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data and transmit difference IM contact data to the wireless device of said IM client that is produced with said 15 comparison of said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data.

2. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said IM access portal is configured to perform said comparison of said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data when the wireless device initially establishes a wireless connection with said IM access portal.

25 3. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said IM access portal is configured to perform said comparison of said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data at a predetermined interval after the wireless device initially establishes the wireless connection with said IM access portal.

30 4. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said IM access portal is configured to

perform said comparison of said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data if said first IM contact data is altered during an IM communication session.

5. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said difference IM contact data has about less addressing data than said first IM contact data.

6. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said difference IM contact data has about less addressing data than said second IM contact data.

7. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, further comprising an IM access portal storage device configured to store said second IM contact data.

15 8. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said wireless device is a cellular telephone.

20 9. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said wireless device is a two-way pager.

25 10. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said wireless device is a mobile Personal Data Assistant (PDA).

11. The apparatus for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 1, wherein said wireless device is a mobile radio.

12. A method for providing Instant Messaging (IM) services in a wireless communication system, comprising:

establishing a wireless communication link between a wireless device and an IM access portal;

5 retrieving first IM contact data associated with an IM client from an IM data storage device of an IM server;

comparing said first IM contact data retrieved from said IM server and second IM contact data associated with said IM client and transmitted to said wireless device of said IM client during a prior wireless connection;

10 generating difference IM contact data with said comparing said first IM contact data associated with said IM client retrieved from said IM server and said second IM contact data associated with said IM client and transmitted to said wireless device of said IM client during said prior wireless connection; and

transmitting said difference IM contact data to the wireless device.

15 13. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said comparing said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data is conducted when the wireless device initially establishes a wireless connection with said IM access portal.

20 14. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said comparing said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data is conducted at a predetermined interval after the wireless device initially establishes the wireless connection with said IM access portal.

25 15. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said comparing said first IM contact data and said second IM contact data is conducted if said first IM contact data is altered during a IM communication session.

16. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said difference IM contact data has about less data than said first IM contact data.

5 17. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said difference IM contact data has about less addressing data than said second IM contact data.

10 18. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said wireless device is a cellular telephone.

15 19. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said wireless device is a two-way pager.

20 20. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said wireless device is a mobile Personal Data Assistant (PDA).

21. The method for providing IM services in the wireless communication system of Claim 12, wherein said wireless device is a mobile radio.